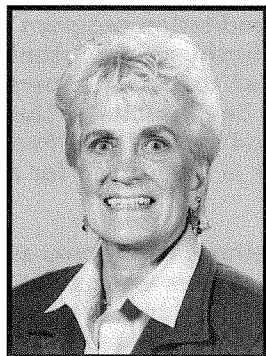


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH A child is reported as a victim of abuse or neglect every five minutes in this state, according to the Michigan Children's Trust Fund (CTF), a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Throughout the month of April, CTF is collaborating with several communities across the state to increase awareness for child abuse prevention. You can help raise awareness this month by wearing a blue ribbon on your lapel or tying a blue ribbon to your car antenna or around a tree. For more information about CTF, including statistics of child abuse and neglect in your area, please visit www.michigan.gov/fia.

DID YOU KNOW? The Blue Ribbon Campaign began in the 1980s as a tribute from Bonnie Finney, a Virginia grandmother, to her grandchild whose battered body was found at the bottom of a canal. She tied a blue ribbon, signifying the pain and bruises suffered by abused children, around the antennae of her van in an effort to raise awareness of the devastating effects of child abuse and neglect.

SENATE PASSES LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PACKAGE Two bills of a bipartisan Senate package to help reduce and eliminate lead poisoning in Michigan passed the Senate and are currently being considered in the House. Senate Bill 753 creates a Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Commission. Responsibilities of the Commission include studying the environmental threats of lead poisoning and its effects on the health of children, reviewing the state's current prevention program, and developing both long- and short-term recommendations. Senate Bill 756 requires the state Department of Community Health (in cooperation with the Family Independence Agency and the Michigan State Housing Authority) to establish and maintain a "lead-safe housing registry." According to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, approximately 900,000 children ages 1 to 5 in this country have an unsafe blood-lead level.

STATE COULD USE PRIVATE ENVIRONMENTAL LABS The Senate recently introduced legislation that would expand the number of private environmental labs eligible to earn business from the state and, in turn, provide additional job opportunities in Michigan. The legislation would also create a state-lab accreditation program and establish uniform laboratory performance standards to expand commercial laboratory business opportunities with the state. The five-bill package will provide for baseline performance standards for lab procedures, personnel training, and equipment. These standards are to ensure that the state Department of Environmental Quality can rely upon lab data to confirm cleanups of contaminated sites and other environmental testing. The five-bill package is part of the second phase of "Job Opportunities for Business Success" (JOBS), a broad plan for revitalizing Michigan's economy.

SNOWMOBILE DEATHS DECLINE As most of the state begins to prepare for warm weather recreational activities, the Michigan Association of Insurance Agents reported that Michigan's snowmobile drivers were safer this winter. According to the Association, the number of snowmobile-related deaths in the state is down dramatically from last year. From December 12, 2003 through March 20, 2004, 27 people died of injuries sustained in snowmobile accidents, down from 45 the previous year. Of the 27 deaths this year, nine were alcohol-related, and that number was 47 percent less than last year. If no further deaths are reported from the regions of the state that still have snow, the season could be one of the safest on record.

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www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom/news/Hotline.htm.